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Letter dated 26 April 2013 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 22 April 2013 from Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, forwarding the conclusions of the fourth meeting of the Support and Follow-up Group on the Situation in Mali, which was held in Bamako on 19 April 2013 (see annex).

I would be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon

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Annex

Letter dated 22 April 2013 from the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union addressed to the Secretary-General

On behalf of the co-chairs of the Support and Follow-up Group on the Situation in Mali, I have the honour to transmit, herewith, the conclusions of the meeting of the Group, which was held in Bamako on 19 April 2013 (see enclosure).

The meeting, whose opening was graced by Interim President Dioncounda Traoré, reviewed the latest developments in Mali and provided an opportunity to exchange views with the Malian authorities on the way forward. The deliberations highlighted the existence of a growing convergence of views with respect to steps to be taken to promote dialogue and reconciliation, find a solution to the problem faced in the city of Kidal, organize credible elections and revamp development efforts.

The next meeting of the Group will be held in Bamako in June 2013. In the meantime, the African Union High Representative for Mali and the Sahel, former President Pierre Buyoya, will facilitate close interaction among key members of the Group through regular meetings of the Joint Coordination Mechanism, which he chairs, in order to ensure effective follow-up of the attached conclusions.

I would be most grateful if the Secretariat would circulate the conclusions to the members of the Security Council for their information and action, as appropriate.

(*Signed*) Ramtane **Lamamra**
Commissioner, Peace and Security

Enclosure

[Original: English and French]

Conclusions of the fourth meeting of the Support and Follow-up Group on the Situation in Mali

Bamako
19 April 2013

1. The Support and Follow-up Group (SFG) on the situation in Mali held its fourth meeting in Bamako, on 19 April 2013, under the co-chairmanship of the African Union (AU) Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ramtane Lamamra, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Jeffrey Feltman, and the President of the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Kadré Désiré Ouédraogo.

2. The meeting, which was opened by H.E. Diouncounda Traoré, Interim President of the Republic of Mali, was attended by Mali, whose delegation was led by the Minister of Labour and Civil Service, in charge of Relations with the Institutions, acting Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Mamadou Namory Traoré, and included the Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation, Moussa Sinko Coulibaly, and the Minister for Humanitarian Action, Solidarity and the Elderly, Mamadou Sidibé; and Foreign Ministers and other senior officials of the region and other AU Member States, as well as bilateral and multilateral international partners. The AU High Representative for Mali and the Sahel, Special Representative and Head of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), Pierre Buyoya, the United Nations Special Representative for West Africa, Saïd Djinnit, the United Nations Special Envoy for the Sahel, Romano Prodi, and the European Union Special Representative for the Sahel, Michel Reveyrand, also attended the meeting.

3. The meeting afforded an opportunity for the participants to review the latest developments in Mali since the last meeting of the SFG, held in Brussels, on 5 February 2013, and to exchange views with the Malian authorities on the way forward. The deliberations highlighted the existence of a growing convergence of views with respect to steps to be taken to promote dialogue and reconciliation, find a solution to the problem faced in the city of Kidal, organize credible elections, and revamp development efforts.

4. The participants noted the progress that continues to be made towards the consolidation of state authority in Mali, with the gradual expansion of state control in the northern regions. They expressed profound appreciation to all the forces involved in the ongoing efforts to secure and stabilize the liberated areas, and paid tribute to the Malian, AFISMA and French forces for their courage and the sacrifices made to free the northern regions from the occupation of armed, terrorist and criminal groups.

5. The participants encouraged the Malian authorities to accelerate the redeployment of State administration to the northern part of the country, particularly the police, the gendarmerie and the judiciary, as well as the rehabilitation and reestablishment of basic services, especially schools and health centres, to create an

environment conducive to normalcy, and to free and voluntary return of internally displaced persons and refugees.

6. The participants drew attention to the prevailing humanitarian situation. They reiterated the urgent need for continued and enhanced assistance to the affected populations, including women and children.

7. With respect to the prevailing situation in the city of Kidal, the participants agreed on the need to ensure the speedy restoration of State authority. They reiterated their demand, made at their Brussels meeting, for the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) to disarm and to unconditionally commit itself to the scrupulous respect for the unity and territorial integrity of Mali, if it desires to be part of the political process. They requested the AU, ECOWAS, the United Nations and the EU, under the coordination of former President Pierre Buyoya, to take appropriate initiatives, building on the ECOWAS mediation efforts, towards the resolution of this problem. The participants stressed the need for all militias to be disbanded and disarmed to facilitate the process of restoring State authority over the entire national territory, as well as enhance confidence, security and prospect for national reconciliation.

8. The participants expressed concern about the allegations of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, which could compromise efforts for national reconciliation in Mali. They took note of the assurances given by the Malian Government and encouraged it to spare no efforts in ensuring respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, including by carrying out investigations on such violations and bringing their perpetrators to justice. They expressed their appreciation to the AU and ECOWAS for the deployment of their first group of human rights observers, and encouraged the two organizations to complete this deployment. They also noted with satisfaction the decision of the United Nations to reinforce its human rights component in Mali. They welcomed the coordination between the AU and ECOWAS observers, on the one hand, the United Nations observers, on the other, and encouraged them to further strengthen their efforts in this respect.

9. The participants expressed their appreciation for the steps taken towards the implementation of the transitional road map. In this respect, they welcomed the establishment of the Dialogue and Reconciliation Commission, with the appointment of its Chair and two vice-Chairs, as well as its 30 Commissioners, who are adequately representative of the diversity of the Malian population. They called on the transitional authorities to do everything possible to enable the Commission to immediately commence its work, and called on the latter to give the required priority to collaboration with civil society and other local stakeholders. They pledged to extend the necessary political, technical and financial support to this end.

10. The participants noted the stated will of the Malian authorities to hold elections in July 2013, and welcomed the sustained efforts being deployed to meet that timeline. They stressed the imperative of creating conditions conducive to the holding of credible, transparent and inclusive elections, including addressing the existing technical and organizational challenges, so as to avoid post-electoral disputes that could undermine the progress made so far. They noted with satisfaction the support being provided to Mali by a number of international partners, and urged for continued engagement to ensure the provision of the required resources for the successful holding of the elections. They stressed the need to establish an

appropriate mechanism to guarantee the credibility of the electoral process and its outcome. In this context, they welcomed the announcements made by regional organizations and other partners of their intention to deploy electoral observers.

11. The participants urged all Malian stakeholders to support the ongoing transition process, as well as the interim authorities. They reiterated the international community's resolve to take measures, including sanctions, against all those undermining the transition process, civilian control over the military and the military chain of command. They requested the United Nations Security Council to consider taking such measures, should the situation so warrant.

12. The participants underlined the importance of further training and reforming the Malian Defence and Security Forces (MDSF), as well as the need to ensure the total restoration of their chain of command, under civilian control. They welcomed the commencement of the military training delivered by the EU Training Mission (EUTM), and called for the speedy materialisation of the pledges made in support of the MDSF during the Addis Ababa pledging conference of 29 January 2013, and requested the United Nations Secretariat to expedite action on the utilization of already available funds. They stressed the need to expand international support to other sectors, including security services and the judicial institutions, as part of the efforts to promote the rule of law.

13. Reiterating the importance of cooperation between the countries of the region with regard to intelligence sharing and surveillance of borders, the participants congratulated the AU for taking the initiative to organize, in Nouakchott, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, on 17 March 2013, the consultative ministerial meeting on regional cooperation and the operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture in the Sahelo-Saharan region, as well as the first meeting of Chiefs of Intelligence Services of the countries of the region, in Bamako, on 18 April 2013. The participants encouraged the countries of the region to cooperate closely, including within their cooperative frameworks such as the Fusion and Liaison Unit (UFL), to enhance the effectiveness of the fight against terrorism and transnational organized crime and facilitate the implementation of AFISMA's mandate.

14. The participants were briefed on the ongoing discussions at the United Nations Security Council on the transformation of AFISMA into a United Nations stabilisation mission, and reiterated their support to this process. They stressed the need for the Security Council to ensure that the envisaged operation strengthen Malian ownership, build on the achievements made with ECOWAS and AU support, and foster enhanced and coordinated African and international engagement in support of peace and security in Mali. They recognized that cont' ued and strong political involvement by AU, ECOWAS and the core countries is essential for the success of the ongoing efforts, and noted, in this regard, the parameters outlined in the AU Peace and Security Council communiqué of 7 March 2013 with respect to the transformation of AFISMA into a United Nations operation and AU's and ECOWAS' emphasis on the need for continuity, building on the efforts of the two Organizations. The participants underscored the need, in the meantime, to provide AFISMA with the requisite support to enhance its effectiveness and facilitate its rehatting. They called on all countries and organizations concerned to redeem pledges made to the AFISMA Trust Fund, and requested the United Nations Secretariat to take immediate steps to help meet the most urgent needs of AFISMA, as communicated by the AU, using the resources already available within the Trust Fund.

15. The participants reiterated the crucial importance of long-term socioeconomic development in order to stabilize Mali and the region. They looked forward to the convening in Brussels, on 15 May 2013, of a high-level donors' conference for the development of Mali under the auspices of Malian Interim President Dioncounda Traoré, President François Hollande of France and the European Commission President, José Manuel Barroso. They also encouraged the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Sahel, Romano Prodi, to pursue and intensify his efforts, notably with regard to the development of an integrated strategy for the Sahel region, to be presented to the United Nations Security Council in May 2013, and his proposal to establish an appropriate instrument, called the Sahel Action Fund, which would allow donors to make both financial and in kind contributions for the long term socioeconomic development of the region. The participants encouraged close consultation between the Special Envoy and relevant African institutions, such as NEPAD, ECOWAS and the African Development Bank (AfDB), as well as with other stakeholders. They welcomed the prospect of the convening of an international conference on security and development in the Sahel.

16. The participants agreed to convene the next meeting of the SFG in Bamako no later than June 2013. They commended the efforts to ensure close interaction among key members of the SFG through meetings of the Joint Coordination Mechanism chaired by the AU High Representative for Mali and the Sahel, Pierre Buyoya. They requested him to convene such meetings on a regular basis to follow-up on these Conclusions. They also requested the co-chairs to submit an update on the implementation of the relevant provisions of these Conclusions at the next meeting of the SFG.